

Inside Region 3

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Service Message Reaches 250,000 at Mall of America

The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service was the lead agency at the Government Expo held recently at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn. Approximately 250,000 people attended the two-day event, which featured exhibits and displays from 51 state and federal agencies, set up at different locations inside the mall. The theme for Service and Natural Resources location was "Promoting and Protecting Healthy Rivers and Waterways." Service staff from the Regional Office and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge manned the Service display. Other partners included the Minnesota DNR and the University of Minnesota Raptor Center. *(Dan Sobieck, External Affairs)*



DUCKS ON A STICK. Sue McDonald of the Minnesota Valley NWR teaches children to identify various waterfowl species at the Service's display at the Mall of America Recently. *(Photo by Dan Sobieck)*

621 Eagles Sited in Illinois, 137 Counted at Mark Twain NWR

A total of 621 eagles were spotted, including 137 at the three divisions of Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge, during the Illinois State Bald Eagle count held recently. The Refuge's Brussels District participated in the state-wide count January 16th. Seven teams of 23 people covered more than 100 miles from Hartford to Hamburg, Ill., along the Mississippi River Road, and from Grafton to Pearl, Ill., on the Illinois River Road. *(Howard Phillips, Mark Twain NWR)*

Illinois Felon Indicted For Violations of Migratory Bird Treaty Act From 1994

A federal grand jury in Illinois recently indicted a Springfield man for wildlife violations that allegedly occurred in 1994. Thomas E. Richards, 29, was charged with the unlawful sale of wild collected migratory waterfowl under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

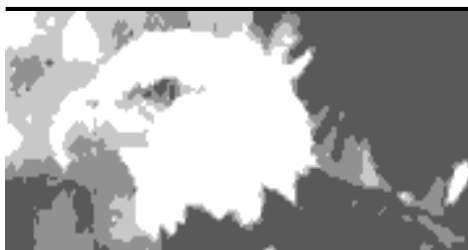
Richards was being investigated by Service Special Agents in 1994, but was never charged for the violations because he was convicted of armed robbery and was sent to prison before charges could be filed.

Richards was paroled in 1998, and later was found in possession of a live red-tail hawk that had been stolen hours before from the Henson-Robinson Zoo in Springfield, Ill.. The two-count indictment charges Richards with a felony violation from 1994 of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act involving illegal sale of of ducks, and a violation of the Lacey Act for transporting and possessing a live red-tail hawk. *(Tim Santel, Springfield Law Enforcement Office)*

1,300 View Eagles During Mingo NWR's Eagle Days

Approximately 1,300 people learned about eagle biology, history and conservation during "Eagle Days" programs and events held recently at Mingo National Wildlife Refuge.

The Mingo visitor center contained numerous special eagle exhibits, and several different eagle videos were shown. A special program by the Dickerson Park Zoo of Springfield,



Mo., featured "Phoenix," a 10-year old bald eagle who has become the ambassador of the species to

Missouri. Visitors used viewing scopes to watch a pair of live eagles at the Duck Creek Conservation Area..

The eagles put on a great show as they were viewed building onto an existing nest the entire weekend. Puzzles and a coloring table for small children was also set up in the visitor center. *(Rod Hansen, Mingo NWR)*

33 Bird Species Sited During Count at Sherburne NWR

A total of 33 species were observed during the Christmas Bird Count held recently at Sherburne NWR. The event, sponsored by the Friends of Sherburne, drew 12 participants for the dawn to dusk count. A golden eagle juvenile was the rarest sighting of the day. Other highlights were trumpeter swans, wild turkeys and gadwall. The 2,326 birds sighted are a 36 percent increase over the 1,481 seen during the 1997 count. The increase may be due to the warm weather and the open water which kept many birds in the area longer. *(Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR)*

100 Attend Wildlife Film Festival at Sherburne NWR

Over 100 people attended the three-night Wildlife Film Festival January 14, 21 and 28 at Sherburne NWR. Each evening's films covered a wide variety of information on wildlife and habitat common to the Refuge. Topics included sandhill cranes, oak savanna, hawks, owls, deer and general wetland and upland wildlife. Four volunteers coordinated set-up and refreshments. *(Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR)*

Service Assists in Release of River Otters at Jefferson Proving Ground

Refuge staff at Jefferson Proving Ground (JPG) recently assisted personnel from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife release six river otters at JPG. Four males and two female otters were released into Otter Creek, supplementing an earlier release of 25 river otters at JPG in January, 1996. Biologists with the Division of Wildlife have released

303 otters to Indiana watersheds since 1995. Biologists picked up the otters in Louisiana and transported them to Purdue University where they were examined and vaccinated. During the exam, one of the female otters was confirmed to be pregnant. Since the first otter release, otters have been sighted at several locations on JPG. *(Joseph R. Robb, Muscatatuck NWR)*

Service's Resource Programs Woven Into North American Quilt

Service outreach programs are now available to more than 200 schools nationwide through the North American Quilt, an online educational program.

Outreach Coordinator Dan Sobieck serves as the on-line subject matter expert for the Service, informing students about Service programs and careers. Other resource panel experts include representatives of the National Park Service, Minnesota DNR and university professors.

Students participating in the online experience are in grades three to eight in more than 200 schools nationwide. The North American Quilt on-line class (www.onlineclass.com) explores geography; including ecosystems,



Outreach Coordinator Dan Sobieck

wildlife, social studies, language arts and general science. *(Dan Sobieck, External Affairs)*

Region's FY99 Habitat Projects Thrive Due to Service Challenge Cost Share Partnerships

The Service Challenge Cost-Share Program, conducted annually since 1988 and in cooperation with hundreds of partners, has allocated more than \$2.6 million in Fiscal Year 1999 funds to Regional field stations. These funds cost-share projects on Service lands, other non-federal lands and on private lands in the eight-state Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region. During this fiscal year, habitat-oriented projects will restore approximately

Partners are contributing approximately \$2.1 million of matching funds, or \$13,896 per project.

600 acres of wetlands and nearly 2,800 acres of associated uplands, predominantly grasslands, on private and public lands. Twenty-eight projects will improve recreational fishing opportunities on national wildlife refuges. Many projects will provide public outreach, public recre-

ation and new or enhanced accessibility features to accommodate physically challenged persons who visit the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Service's Regional expenditure for 148 projects is \$545,000, or \$3,682 per project. Partners are contributing approximately \$2.1 million of matching funds, or \$13,896 per project. The Partner:Service cost-share ratio is nearly 4 to 1. (*Steve Kufrin, Private Lands Office*).

Minnesota Valley Programs Reach More Than 4,000 in First Quarter

Approximately 4,160 visitors were reached through environmental education and interpretation programs at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge from October - December, 1998. Programs included pre-school, scout, educator workshops, and community events. The largest number of visitors reached was through National Wildlife Refuge

Week events in October, where over 1,200 visitor contacts were made. The refuge staff partnered with Education Strategies, from the Office of the Attorney General, to host four teacher workshops on environmental education. The refuge staff also partnered with the Mall of America to participate in the annual Ecommunities event. Ecommunities

is a two-day event at the Mall focused on preserving our planet. Refuge staff hosted a booth displaying endangered species items and information. (*Sue McDonald, MVNWR*)

Muscatatuck's Restle Unit Study Confirms Presence of 95 Species

Refuge staff, together with three Indiana University students recently completed a report summarizing the results of a wetland delineation and other wildlife projects conducted last fall at the Restle unit of Muscatatuck NWR.

The January 1999 report includes historical knowledge, wetland delineation, and wildlife records for the unit. The report confirms the presence on the unit of 81 bird species, (including seven state-threatened species,) eight herptofauna, and six mammals.

The report also includes management recommendations. (*Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR*)

Necedah Refuge Staff, Wisconsin State Agencies Share Conservation Strategies

Staff from Necedah National Wildlife Refuge and land managers from central Wisconsin met recently in Mauston, Wis., to share strategies for addressing local resource problems and opportunities. Representatives from 20 agencies in Adams and Juneau counties attended the annual Central Wisconsin Land Management Interagency Conference.

Topics discussed included new wind and watershed projects, county-wide development planning, and cost-shared land stewardship programs for private landowners.

Refuge staff also attended portions of a two-day wildlife management training conference in Eau Claire, Wis. The theme of the conference, sponsored by the Wisconsin DNR, was "Building Skills for the 21st Century."

Topics included wetland regulation and biology, grasslands and savannas, forest management, new technology, and wildlife education.

Both meetings proved excellent opportunities to strengthen partnerships and network with State natural resource professionals. (*David Trudeau, Necedah NWR*)

\$3.3 Million Polander Lake Project to Begin This Summer

Manmade Islands Will Restore Habitat on Mississippi River Backwater Lake

Construction is scheduled to begin this summer on Phase II of an Environmental Management Program project to restore a backwater lake on the Mississippi River. The \$3.3 million Polander Lake Project will use manmade islands

to break up wind and water energy along the Mississippi River near Winona, Minn., to reduce sedimentation and create calm areas that will produce vegetation. Phase I, completed four years ago, helped reestablish the integrity of the barrier islands that separate Polander Lake from the River's main channel upstream from Lock and Dam 5A. Service staff from the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge is working with the Corps of Engineers

to ensure that the islands are constructed with maximum habitat benefits, cost efficiency, and minimal maintenance in mind. The Environmental Management Program is a conservation partnership of the Service, Army Corps of Engineer and the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois and Missouri. Approximately 70 percent of the Programs budget is directed to habitat restoration projects. (Keith Beseke, UMRNW&FR)

Winter Fun Day Activities Bring 800 Visitors to Sherburne NWR

More than 800 visitors attended the fifth annual Winter Fun Day held recently at Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge. The family-oriented event provided both youth and adults the opportunity to enjoy low impact winter outdoor recreation activities, learn about the adaptations of wildlife and plants to winter and celebrate the 96th birthday of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Visitors were able to try snowshoeing, cross coun-

try skiing, and skijoring, many for the first time. Volunteer wildlife interpreters provided Interpretive information on the oak savanna and wetland habitats on the Refuge for visitors via a horse-drawn sleigh ride. The presentation on dog sledding attracted more than 225 people, and was followed by a drawing for 10 free dog sled rides. Other activities included demonstrations on winter camping and ice fishing, talks on wildlife in

winter and winter bird feeding, kid's crafts and face painting. The day ended with a candlelight ski and bonfire at Sand Dunes State Forest which drew over 135 skiers. The event was co-sponsored by the Refuge and the Friends of Sherburne and made possible with assistance from 65 Refuge volunteers and seven local businesses. Regional Director Bill Hartwig also attended. (Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR)

List of Accomplishment Reports Received

The following Accomplishment Reports were received 2/16/99.

226. Congressional Contact List on the Intranet

Jane Noll West, External Affairs

227. Youth Waterfowl Hunt Successful on Ottawa NWR

Christy Smith, Ottawa NWR

228. Adult Waterfowl Hunt Successful on Ottawa NWR

Christy Smith, Ottawa NWR

229. District Coordinates Wildlife Contest at West Otter Tail Crop and Forage Show

Chuck Vuconich, Fergus Falls WMD

230. LaCrosse Center Hosts Introduction to Fish Health Management Course

Becky Lasee, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

231. MNWR Training Site for Wetland Specialists

Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

232. Muscatatuck Restle Unit Study Confirms Presence of 95 Species

Susan Knowles, Muscatatuck NWR

233. Fish Health Center Recognizes Volunteers' 719 Hours

Becky Lasee, LaCrosse Fish Health Center

234. Refuge Learning Center Presents "Mammals of the Canadian Rockies"

Becky Goche, Shiawasee NWR

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| <p>235. Illinois Felon Indicted for 1994 Violations of Migratory Bird Treaty Act
Tim Santel, Springfield Law Enforcement Office</p> <p>236. 1,300 Attend Events, View Bald Eagles During 'Eagle Days' at Mingo NWR
Rod Hansen, Mingo NWR</p> <p>237. Outreach: Service Message Reaches 250,000 at Mall of America
Dan Sobieck, External Affairs</p> <p>238. Services Resource Programs Woven Into North American Quilt
Dan Sobieck, External Affairs</p> <p>239. Outreach Plan for Northern Tallgrass Prairie HPA
Dan Sobieck, External Affairs</p> <p>240. Buena Vista County, Iowa Eagle Display
Dan Sobieck, External Affairs</p> <p>241. Refuge Celebrates National Wildlife Refuge Week With Photo Contest
Robert Dreislein, UMN&WR</p> <p>242. Second Annual WildGame Dinner Smashing Success
Terry Schreiner, Minnesota Valley NWR</p> <p>243. Minnesota Valley Resource Programs Reach More than 4,000 in First Quarter
Sue McDonald, Minnesota Valley NWR</p> | <p>244. Manmade Islands to Restore Vegetation and Habitat on Mississippi River Backwater Lake
Keith Beseke, UMRNW&FR</p> <p>245. Winter Fun Day Activities Bring 800 Visitors to Sherburne NWR
Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR</p> <p>246. Cypress Creek Refuge Staff Visit The 'Other Cache River'
Marguerite Hills, Cypress Creek NWR</p> <p>247. 33 Species Sited During Christmas Bird Count at Sherburne NWR
Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR</p> <p>248. Wildlife Film Festival at Sherburne NWR
Nancy Haugen, Sherburne NWR</p> <p>249. Service Assists Indiana DNR Release River Otters at Jefferson Proving Ground
Joseph R. Robb, Muscatatuck NWR</p> <p>250. Illinois' Midwinter Count Tallies 621 Eagles, 137 at Mark Twain NWR
Howard Phillips, Mark Twain NWR</p> <p>251. Habitat Projects Thrive Due to Service's Cost-Share Partnerships
Steve Kufrin, Private Lands</p> | <p>252. Necedah NWR Helps Scout Achieve Bear Badge
Jennifer Rabuck, Necedah NWR</p> <p>253. Necedah NWR Holds Tracking Workshop
Jennifer Rabuck, Necedah NWR</p> <p>254. Refuge Staff and Wisconsin State Agencies Share Conservation Strategies
David Trudeau, Necedah NWR</p> <p>255. Necedah NWR Attends Wisconsin Wildlife Management Training
David Trudeau, Necedah NWR</p> <p>256. Necedah NWR Interviewed Re: Whooping Crane Study
David Trudeau, Necedah NWR</p> <p>257. Necedah NWR Interviewed Re: Prescription Burning
David Trudeau, Necedah NWR</p> <p>258. Horicon NWR Offers Wildlife Discovery Trunk to Educators
Molly Stoddard, Horicon NWR</p> |
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Inside Region 3

Inside Region 3 is produced by the External Affairs Office, Region 3, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ft. Snelling, Minnesota. Items herein are selected from reports submitted from the field via the Accomplishment Reporting System. Questions concerning Inside Region 3, or the Accomplishment Reporting System should be addressed to Scott Flaherty, **612-713-5309** or scott_flaherty@mail.fws.gov.



Great Lakes
Big Rivers

Region 3